

# CONNECTION

APRIL 2009

## NEW INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE PULLS INTO VIRGINIA

On April 1, 2009, Governor Kaine, Delegate Shannon Valentine, Senator Stephen Newman, Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman, and representatives from local government, DRPT and Amtrak gathered in Lynchburg to celebrate a major milestone for passenger rail service in Virginia.

The two routes will add one new Amtrak train from Lynchburg to Washington, D.C., and one from Richmond

to Washington, D.C., to enhance passenger rail transportation with more frequent service and improve rail operations along those corridors through infrastructure improvements.

The Richmond to Washington, D.C., train will make one daily round trip and will include stops at Staples Mill, Ashland, Fredericksburg, Quantico, Woodbridge, Alexandria and L'Enfant Plaza. Firm schedules are being finalized, but the train will tentatively leave Richmond at 7:00 a.m. and arrive in Washington at 9:30 a.m. The return train will tentatively leave Washington at 4:00 p.m. and arrive in Richmond between 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

The Lynchburg to Washington, D.C., train will make one daily round trip and will include stops at Kemper Street, Charlottesville, Culpeper, Manassas, Burke Center, Alexandria and L'Enfant Plaza. The train will tentatively leave Lynchburg at 7:45 a.m. and arrive in Washington between 11:20 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. The return train will tentatively leave Washington at 5:00 p.m. and arrive in Lynchburg at 8:30 p.m.

Funding has also been approved for infrastructure projects associated with passenger rail service along these routes, including track and station upgrades that will enhance service speed and reliability.

It is estimated that the two new intercity passenger rail services will remove 1.4 million cars from highways, save more than 8.3 million gallons of fuel and save 66,000 tons of carbon emissions each year.

Amtrak's Board is expected to approve the Virginia service agreement this spring.

The Lynchburg to Washington, D.C., service is anticipated to begin operations in October 2009, and the Richmond to Washington, D.C., service is anticipated to begin in December 2009. Both services will be funded as demonstration projects for three years. At the completion of three years, a dedicated funding source must be identified to continue to operate the service.



### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the April 2009 issue of Connection, our first issue of the year. Connection has moved to a quarterly format, so expect your next issue in July. This is my first issue as DRPT's Director, and

I am excited to bring you updates on rail, transit and transportation demand management (TDM) initiatives since our last issue.

This issue is all about progress. DRPT hit the ground running this year, and many of our major initiatives have seen a great deal of progress. Construction of The Tide is continuing, studies to evaluate new transit services for Virginia are moving, rail initiatives have received funding to advance, TDM programs are growing, and many local transit operators are forging ahead with new services and facilities. Even DRPT is moving! Our Richmond headquarters will move down the street at the end of this month.

Perhaps two of the most exciting recent developments are the \$900 million Full Funding Grant Agreement for Phase I of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, and the signing of operating agreements for the Commonwealth to initiate new regional passenger rail service.

I hope you enjoy reading the April issue of Connection, and feel free to send us your business news for future issues at [drptpr@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:drptpr@drpt.virginia.gov).

Chip Badger, P.E.

## I-66 TRANSIT/TDM STUDY ADVANCES



The I-66 Transit/Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Study, which is evaluating short- and medium-term transit and TDM enhancements along the I-66 corridor, is underway. Public meetings to provide additional information on the study have been scheduled for May (see calendar for details). The study, which is evaluating potential improvements such as enhanced bus service, Bus Rapid Transit, and additional carpooling, vanpooling and park and ride options, is scheduled for completion in November 2009. Visit [www.drpt.virginia.gov/activities/I66study.aspx](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/activities/I66study.aspx) for more information.

## FEDERAL FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION

President Obama identified transportation as a key priority for his administration and has followed up with increased transportation funding at the federal level. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act includes \$48.76 billion for transportation investments, the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act includes \$12.29 billion for rail and transit and the President's FY10 budget includes \$72.5 billion for transportation. Virginia has received preliminary guidance regarding allocations to the Commonwealth. Additional information is available on DRPT's RSS feed at [www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/DRPTRSS.xml](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/DRPTRSS.xml).

## DULLES FULL FUNDING GRANT AGREEMENT SIGNED

On March 10, the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project achieved a major milestone when U.S. Secretary of Transportation LaHood signed a Full Funding Grant Agreement, committing \$900 million in federal funds toward the completion of Phase I of the project. Phase I, which is scheduled for completion in 2013, will extend Metrorail service from East Falls Church to Wiehle Avenue in Reston. Utility relocation has already begun and construction activities are anticipated to begin in May. Visit [www.dullesmetro.com](http://www.dullesmetro.com) for more information.



## THE TIDE CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES



Construction on Norfolk's light rail line is underway as crews work to build the 7.4 mile system. In order to ensure that local residents and businesses have access to the latest news and construction updates, Hampton Roads Transit has implemented a public outreach program. Public Outreach Coordinators are available to provide updates, work directly with contractors, and maintain frequent communication with residents and businesses, particularly in the areas impacted by The Tide construction. For more information on The Tide, visit [www.ridethetide.com](http://www.ridethetide.com).

## GOING GREEN WITH TELEWORK!VA

Since its inception in 2001, more than 120 businesses in Virginia have taken advantage of DRPT's Telework!VA program to begin or expand a telework program for employees. As the Megaprojects in Northern Virginia advance toward construction, DRPT is ramping up efforts to enroll regional businesses in the program to help manage highway congestion during construction. On Earth Day, April 22, DRPT hosted an educational event for Northern Virginia businesses to provide additional information on how to incorporate telework into an organization. Delegate James Scott and Secretary of Transportation Pierce Homer spoke about how telework can benefit businesses, employees and the environment. More information on Telework!VA is available at [www.teleworkva.org](http://www.teleworkva.org).

## BRT STUDIES MOVING IN VIRGINIA



Several efforts are underway to evaluate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), an enhanced bus system that combines the flexibility of buses with the efficiency of rail, in several areas of the Commonwealth. BRT was identified as a potential transit enhancement in Northern Virginia in the I-95/I-395 Transit/TDM Study. DRPT is taking the next step with the I-95/I-395 BRT Operational Analysis, which will evaluate potential service design to determine the feasibility of integrating BRT into the area's transit network. The study is anticipated to be complete in June 2009. In Richmond, DRPT is working with GRTC to determine the feasibility of adding BRT in the Broad St. Corridor from Willow Lawn to Rocketts Landing. The study team has been assembled and work will begin soon. The study is anticipated to be complete in June 2010.

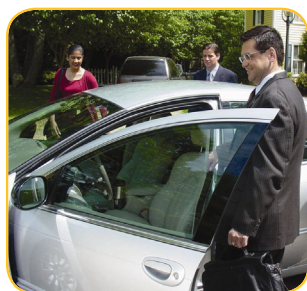
## DRAFT RAIL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM DEVELOPED

DRPT has developed project recommendations for Rail Enhancement funding in the FY10-FY15 Six-Year Improvement Plan based on applications received during the recent application period. DRPT will present these projects to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) as part of the draft transportation program at the Board's May 20 meeting. The recommended \$233.5 million, six-year program will fund projects to enhance freight rail operations, improve transportation at the Ports of Hampton

Roads and Richmond, and enhance passenger rail service in Virginia. The Rail Advisory Board recommended the projects at their April meeting, and CTB action is expected at the June 17 meeting following public hearings. Visit [www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/refapps.aspx](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/refapps.aspx) for detailed information on the recommended projects.



## DRPT RELEASES STATE OF THE COMMUTE REPORT



DRPT recently published the findings of the State of the Commute Report, which resulted from a statewide survey to gain information on commuting trends and attitudes in Virginia. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

(MWCOC) administered the survey for the Northern Virginia region and DRPT surveyed the remaining markets in Virginia. The results were combined to provide a snapshot of the current statewide commuting situation and valuable perspective on the similarities and differences in mature and evolving commuter markets. A summary report and presentation are available at [www.drpt.virginia.gov/activities/stateofcommute.aspx](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/activities/stateofcommute.aspx).

## RICHMOND TO DOSWELL RAIL ROUTE RECOMMENDED

DRPT has submitted documentation to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) that identifies the eastern route along the Buckingham Branch railroad tracks as an "alternative considered but dismissed" for high speed passenger rail service from Richmond to Doswell. DRPT evaluated two routes for potential high speed passenger rail service, as required by the federal planning process. The cost of construction and environmental concerns led DRPT to request that FRA dismiss the eastern route. The recommended western route follows the CSX railroad tracks along I-95 from Richmond's Main Street Station to the Staples Mill and Ashland train stations. Once FRA makes a route decision, this portion of the corridor will be eligible for additional federal funding.



## FEDERAL NEWS

- The Commuter Act of 2009 would encourage transit usage by allowing employers a refundable tax credit for 50 percent of the cost of transit passes provided on a tax-free basis to employees. The bill is in the House Committee on Ways and Means for discussion.
- The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Improvement Act of 2009 would revise the JARC grant program with regard to combined applications, reporting and certification requirements, pilot programs and technical assistance. JARC grants provide funding for the transportation needs of welfare recipients and low-income

individuals seeking to obtain and maintain employment. The bill is in the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs for discussion.

- The Freight Rail Infrastructure Capacity Expansion Act of 2009 would provide incentives to encourage investment in the expansion of freight rail infrastructure capacity. The bill is in the House Committee on Ways and Means for discussion.
- DRPT provides updates on federal bills online through its RSS feed [www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/DRPTRSS.xml](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/DRPTRSS.xml).

## DID YOU KNOW...

- In March, Alexandria Transit Company celebrated 25 years of its DASH bus service. Launched in 1984, DASH operates over 60 buses and carries four million passengers annually. For more information on Alexandria Transit Company's services, visit [www.dashbus.com](http://www.dashbus.com).
- DRPT recently launched an RSS Feed to provide timely rail, transit and transportation demand management news and updates. Subscribe to the feed at [www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/DRPTRSS.xml](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/news/DRPTRSS.xml).
- On April 23 – 24, DRPT's Richmond headquarters is moving to 600 E. Main St., Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219. All DRPT phone and fax numbers will remain the same.
- The Community Transportation Association of Virginia (CTAV) held the 2009 Virginia State Paratransit Rodeo on April 18, in Fredericksburg. For additional information on the Virginia Paratransit Rodeo, visit [www.ctav.org](http://www.ctav.org).
- Many transit operators are growing to meet the increased demand for transit services:
  - Valley Connector extended its Regional Shuttle and Commuter Bus service by adding three new routes ([www.shenvalleycommuters.com](http://www.shenvalleycommuters.com)).
  - The Town of Purcellville started the Western Flyer Trolley service that will run Monday through Friday for eight hours a day ([www.purcellvilleva.gov](http://www.purcellvilleva.gov)).
  - Charlottesville Transit Service broke ground on a new maintenance and operations facility ([www.charlottesville.org/Index.aspx?page=661](http://www.charlottesville.org/Index.aspx?page=661)).
  - Virginia Regional Transit began the West Falls Church Express, a new bus service at the George Washington University campus in Loudoun County. ([www.vatransit.org](http://www.vatransit.org)).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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|------------|---|
| 4/23 – 24  | DRPT Office Move, Richmond, VA  |
| 5/6        | 2009 Spring TDM Meeting<br>Richmond, VA   |
| 5/8        | Virginians for High Speed Rail<br>Annual Meeting, Charlottesville, VA                     |
| 5/12 – 14  | I-66 Transit/TDM Study Public<br>Meetings, Arlington, Haymarket<br>and Vienna             |
| 5/14       | AASHTO Spring Meeting, Bedford PA   |
| 5/20 – 21  | CTB Workshop and Action Meeting<br>Richmond, VA   |
| 5/31 – 6/5 | CTAA National Conference<br>Providence, RI  |
| 6/1 – 3    | DRPT Transit/TDM Spring Workshops<br>Richmond, Northern Virginia<br>and Salem             |
| 6/1 – 4    | FY10 – 15 SYIP Public Meetings<br>Richmond, Northern Virginia, Salem<br>and Hampton Roads |
| 6/8 – 9    | VTA Annual Conference<br>Fredericksburg, VA   |
| 6/17 – 18  | CTB Workshop and Action Meeting<br>Richmond, VA   |
| 6/21 – 23  | NASTO Annual Meeting<br>Manchester, VT  |
| 6/29       | DRPT Quarterly Transit/TDM<br>Stakeholder Meeting, Richmond, VA                           |
| 6/30       | DRPT Quarterly Rail Stakeholder<br>Meeting, Richmond, VA                                  |
| 7/9        | Rail Advisory Board Meeting<br>Richmond, VA   |
| 7/15 – 16  | CTB Workshop and Action Meeting<br>Richmond, VA   |